



COUNTY PARKS BOARD
Meeting Minutes
February 11,2021

- I. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Natrona County Parks Board brought to order at 5:30p.m by Jim Miller. This meeting was held via Zoom.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Jim Miller, Stuart Hill, Tina Kruse. Parks Director Mike Haigler. Chairman Roy Buck and Brook Kaufman (Liaison) were absent.
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. **APPROVAL:** Stuart Hill motioned for approval of the January 14th, 2021 meeting minuets. Tina Kruse seconded the motion. Motioned carried.
- V. **REPORTS: Park Director:** Jim Miller approved the Directors Report as written with no objections.

A. MOUNTAIN PARKS UPDATE:

1. Mountain well/water system:

Mike Haigler reported that the water is still not on. Progress has been made on the delivery of the power system. They have a schedule to hook up the main power. The pump house power is established but they are waiting on the chlorinator. They may have power in a week or two but they don't have water.

2. Trail center:

Mike Haigler reported that the meter hub and the panel have been installed. All they need is power ran to it. Rocky Mountain Power is working on that as well. There is nothing to report on the new lodge at this time. They are still entertaining funding sources.

3. Rotary Park Bridal Trail Construction:

Mike Haigler reported that they are still planning to put in the stairs but they haven't done any more on that project. Nothing more to report on that project.

B. PATHFINDER/ALCOVA

1. Road Maintenance Project:

Mike Haigler reported that 71 Construction has pretty much finished the installation of the gravel in the Cottonwood, Black Beach, and cabin areas. They are working on the cleanup of the driveways and some contouring they have left to do. Mike reports that he expects to do a final walk through by the end of the month.

2. Full Hookup Bath House:

Mike Haigler reported that there hasn't been anything more done on this project. They are waiting until spring so they can finish.

3. Lowering of Alcova Lake:

Mike Haigler reported that the lake is back up to its winter elevation and it's iced over.

4. Disturbance of Federal Land without a Permit:

Mike Haigler reported that the disturbance out there on the Federal land in the cabin area has been resolved. He sent a letter to the individual and they will come back and reclaim the area. They will put the dirt back and reseed it.

5. RFP Pathfinder Master Plan Project:

Mike Haigler reported that they are in process of preparing an RFP based off the master plan. This will be at Pathfinder. They will do the engineering; whoever the successful engineer is on the RFP will do the design work and then bid it out. It should be underway in 2022.

VI. CivicRec (online reservation system):

Mike Haigler reported that Parks and I.T. have been working on this project for some time now. It's going to be an online reservation system that campers and people who want to rent shelters can go online to reserve specific areas. They are Black Beach, Okie Beach, and all of Casper Mountain. Mike reported that they will have more on that with a public announcement and training for the public on how to access that site and get registered. He reported that they are still in some testing phases with the program right now but plan on going to a soft live in April. Campers will still only

be able to stay the 10 days just like it is now. The rules governing that will not change.

Stuart Hill asked if that will be online only?

Mike Haigler responded that you can do it on your phone or come into the office and register there too.

Stuart Hill asked if everyone is going to have to pre-register their camping spots?

Mike Haigler responded yes and once they are in the system that it won't be that difficult the next time. He clarified that it's not going to be difficult it's just going to be a learning curve.

Jim Miller asked if you can no longer go up there and take a site and sign in?

Mike Haigler responded no they can't do that, it will be reservation only so they won't be able to pick up a camping book and pay your fee in the park. Mike stated that you can sit on your phone if you have service and make the reservation but that may be more difficult than if you just sit at home and get pre-registered.

Stuart Hill asked if there will be an education campaign?

Mike Haigler responded that yes they will have some public service announcements and a training video that people can watch step-by-step. Hopefully it goes smooth. He believes that it will be neat and has seen where Yellowstone and another State Park moved to it this year. Everyone is going that route; they don't want to handle money anymore so this takes that out of the loop. They are still going to have non-reserve sites. Cottonwood, West Side, Fremont Canyon, a number of areas other than the mountain.

VII. New Parks Assistant:

Mike Haigler reported that the new Parks Assistant Mr. Bob Adams is going to be here on March 8th. He is coming from the Fort Collins, Greeley, Colorado area. He has

about 28 years of experience in parks and recreation. Mike reported that he is looking forward to that.

Mike Haigler reported on an issue that was not on the agenda but reported that a memo to the Bureau from the Secretary of Interior stated that there is a temporary suspension of delegated authority. Mike reported that in a nutshell, it stops all of their permitting of work on boat docks, decks, and anything that has to do with the disturbance of ground at the Federal sites at the lake. This is for 60 days. It goes until March and then they will re-evaluate it. Mike reported that he doesn't know how long it will be in effect but right now they can take applications but they cannot process them. The Bureau can't authorize them.

Stuart Hill asked if this affects anything that is going on out there right now?

Mike Haigler replied that anything that predates this is still underway. They cannot start anything new. It will hamper anyone who has not got their permits in and approved.

Stuart Hill asked if they were going to be using the same design for the shelters that are in the master plan for Pathfinder.

Mike Haigler replied that they would be using the same footprint for those so they don't have to start over and so everything looks the same.

Mike Haigler reported that he had one more thing to add. On Black Beach they still do not have the fishing pier tore down yet. Because of the temperatures, the gentleman with the track hoe hasn't gone out there.

Stuart Hill replied that he didn't know about it.

Mike Haigler explained it's the fishing pier at Black Beach that caved in. It was kind of a handicap fishing pier and it has to come down.

Stuart Hill asked if they were looking at putting it back up?

Mike Haigler reported yes but not there. It's too unstable and probably should've been put there. When the water comes back it's going to end up in the lake. It is all roped off right now so you can't go out there and shouldn't go out there. There are signs posted.

VIII. Public Comments:

Douglas Irvine thanked everyone for coming out in this nice weather. Douglas said that as long as they are going to be in this pandemic mode for a little bit and with the dispersed nature of the County; he would like the Board to consider working with I.T. to open up the Zoom meeting to the public so they can have more input. He believes it will be technically feasible but said he will leave that up to the I.T. folks. Allowing people to remotely connect and participate in the public discourse will get a lot more public participation. He stated that there are a lot of people on the mountain and he's assuming elsewhere that aren't able to make it into town. Considering things getting back to normal it, would be a valuable tool for the Board to solicit more public feedback. The other question Mr. Irvin had is the Trail Center design process. He stated that with the Commission looking at ways to decrease the price tag or obtain funding, he asked if there was a RFP put together to solicit other design firms that might have other price point options, that might be more palatable to the Commission and the County.

Jim Miller replied that he believes the Commissioners have the choice to send it out to other people.

Mike Haigler responded that there was not an RFB and Stateline was employed to look at the design. It is not necessarily to the point where it would go out to bid until we know what it's going to be to start with. They are kind of in a flux period right now to come up with something everyone agrees with. He reported that it would be a package that goes out to bid. They are in a process to rapidly come up with some building design and with everything that happened up there, it just snowballed. It has slowed down now and they are able to look at a two-year window.

Mr. Irvine replied that he understood that there had been an extension on the time line. He stated that he didn't know if the design itself had contributed to the high price tag or if there were other more affordable options that other designs allow.

Mike Haigler replied that the design was driven by the charrettes that the people attended and they picked options. The first run was based on that. He stated that it was expensive. He believes that people expected to come away from that with something less but that is where they are right now.

Jim Miller stated that that is something that he has heard in the past; make the meeting open in Zoom.

IX. Board Comments:

Stuart Hill stated that he had questions for Mike. He asked if there were any updates at the lake cabin wise and the marina.

Mike Haigler replied that they submitted their master plan and it has been approved. It will be based on his funding to where he goes futuristically with his designs. The Ski Club has theirs done, Pathfinder has theirs done, the Boat Club does not. The marina has their PUD's done and Pathfinder is working on theirs, and the Ski Club has theirs finished.

Stuart Hill stated that he has had a lot of people asking about the Trail Center. It would be nice to get some more information. Commissioner Kaufman is not in the meeting so they can talk to her later and see if she has anything else also. Hopefully we will get some heat up there one of these days.

Jim Miller commented that looking at the amount of people they have out there and looking in to the summer, should they have a host family up there. It has been talked about in the past. A host family is a campground host that is a free unpaid position.

Mike Haigler stated that he doesn't know in the time he has been here that there has ever been anyone who has shown an interest in that.

Jim Miller stated that he believes that they would have to go out for it.

Mike Haigler responded that with it going to reservations up there that the Parks people are going to be working to make sure everyone is out of the spots when someone else is coming in. It would have to be someone dependable and he doesn't know if a volunteer process would work very well for that. They used to have people that did trail pass checking and some other things before 2003 but he doesn't know anyone who has shown interest. They clean fire pits, pick up garbage, and clean toilets.

Jim Miller commented that he was thinking with the activity they are going to have this summer with camping and COVID still going on it's going to be busy. They might look at it down the road or think about it.

Mike Haigler responded that if they have someone in mind to let them know to come see him.

Stuart Hill asked if they could put something out on the website maybe if anybody is interested. They would have to have good rules and guidelines of what they can and can't do.

Jim Miller commented that he had presented this to the last Director or two Directors ago. He was looking into the rules and regulations of what they would be able to do and not do but he never put it out. Jim stated that he had sent him a bunch of information on different areas, Montana, Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming that already had written rules.

Stuart Hill commented that he see's those folks at the campgrounds they visit and it's used all across the country.

Mike Haigler responded that he will look into it.

X. Adjournment:

Stuart Hill moved to adjournment. Tina seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

